

Service with a Smile



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The Director's Corner

A paradigm shift in highway design?

Context-sensitive design is being widely discussed throughout the nation. In July 1997 the Federal Highway Administration published what they intended to be a companion to AASHTO's "Green Book" titled "Flexibility in Highway Design." The cover story of the October 1997 issue of Governing magazine was about "The Asphalt Rebellion" which related community resistance to standard roadway design practices which were perceived as being insensitive to community values.

These publications generated a wide ranging discussion which engendered a special conference sponsored by FHWA, AASHTO and the Maryland DOT on "Thinking Beyond the Pavement" held at the University of Maryland in May. [Note: The "Green Book" is the bible of highway design, officially titled "A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets", published by the American Association of Highway Officials or AASHTO.]

As defined at the Maryland conference: "Context-sensitive design is another way of saying 'to think beyond the pavement' about the impact a travelway will have on the area it traverses, including the people who live, work or pass through the area. Context-sensitive design asks questions first about the need and purpose of the transportation project and then address equally: safety, mobility and the preservation of scenic, aesthetic, historic,



Tom Stephens, P.E.
Director

environmental and other community values. Context-sensitive design involves a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach in which citizens are part of the design team."

The concept assumes that anyone who has something at stake in a project or policy should have a voice. Stakeholders include neighbors, businesses, motorists, truckers, pedestrians and environmentalists. It involves efficient and effective use of resources such as time, budget and community values that will result in design and construction with limited disruption to the communities that use and pay for the highways we build. The payoff is great for all the partners involved.

One specific finding at the conference was that the use of uniform design standards may imply that deviations are inferior when they might actually be just what is needed in the case of a historic stone bridge or a structure near a natural wonder. In Nevada individual trees to which no one in the East would give a second thought are highly valued.

Success of this concept will require transformation—a new approach, a new philosophy, a paradigm shift. The Interstate Highway System was built as the greatest freeway system ever. It did not, however, take into account the factors of aesthetics, environment or community values that may drive projects today. Because every project is unique, we must be committed to developing exceptional designs that fit the needs of our customers and stakeholders.

Until 1991, the "Green Book" standards had to be met on every project. ISTEA changed all that. Wider, straighter, flatter, faster, were the highway designer's marching orders but ISTEA allowed the scenic, aesthetic, historic, community, and preservation impacts to be taken into account.

"Aesthetic, scenic, historic and cultural resources and physical characteristics of an area are always important factors because they help give a community its identity and sense of place and are a source of local pride," according to the FHWA "Flexibility in Highway Design" guide.

Somehow we need to balance community values against the requirements of time, money, safety, environment, and mobility. As AASHTO Executive Director Frank Francois said, "Aesthetic community-sensitive design is where our nation wants to go, and we should go with them." Are we here in Nevada ready for the trip?

“

Context-sensitive design is another way of saying 'to think beyond the pavement' about the impact a travelway will have on the area it traverses, including the people who live, work or pass through the area.

”

Fast Friends

The Freeway Service Patrol is a Las Vegas Hit

Like the old story of the boy who pulls a thorn from a lion's paw and the lion is eternally grateful and on his way again, the crew of the Freeway Service Patrol on U.S. 95 and Interstate 15 in Las Vegas make friends fast.

Their purpose in life is to help, rescue and restore, and nobody is happier than the motorists they serve.

The patrol was born of the U.S. 95 Major Investment Study that evaluated traffic management solutions for the valley's congested northwest corridor. While many of the MIS improvements will take several years and millions of dollars, the freeway service patrol concept was tabbed as a quick fix to help alleviate congestion and offer some relief to the 330,000 motorists who use the Spaghetti Bowl Interchange daily. A bargain at \$633,000 annually, under a three-year contract, the program works for Las Vegas.

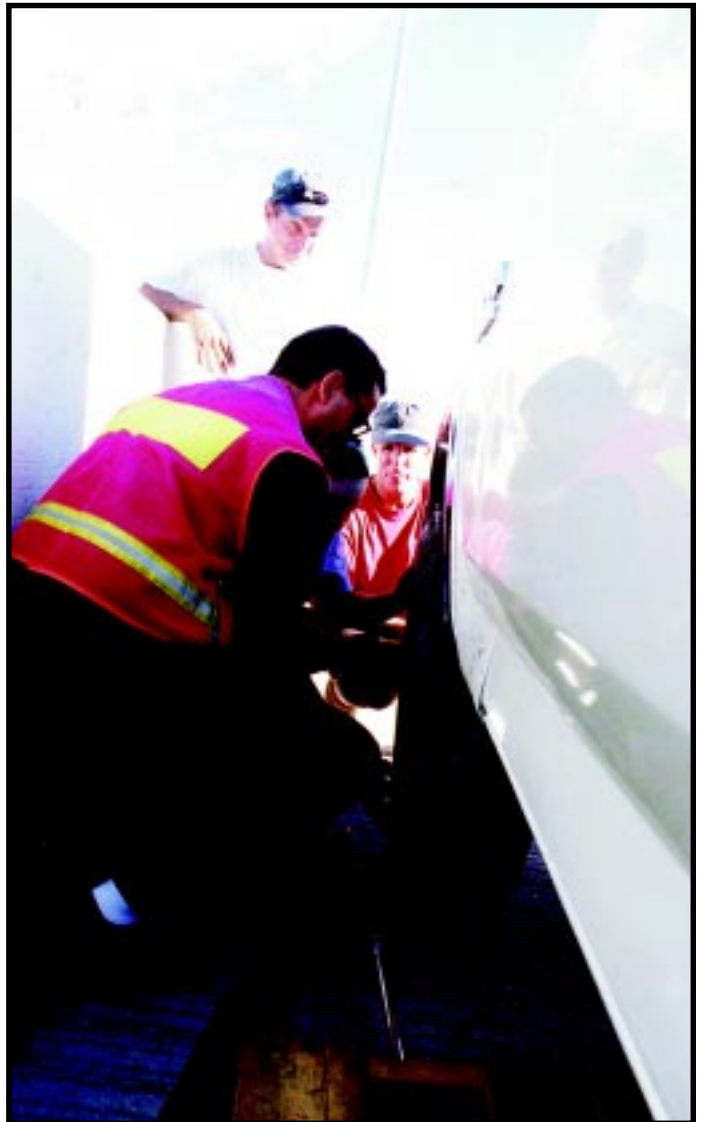
The concept is simple. Everything that blocks the road, even momentarily, backs up traffic. By clearing incidents quickly, the freeway can return to normal as soon as possible, reducing and even preventing secondary accidents. Motorist safety is an immeasurable added benefit.

Shoulders along northbound U.S. 95 past the Spaghetti Bowl were eliminated when they were converted to additional travel lanes more than a year ago. NDOT added accident investigation sites for emergency use but breakdowns were another story. They can hold up traffic anywhere at anytime.

Enter the FSP

In April, specially equipped roadside assistance vans began cruising U.S. 95 from Tropicana Avenue to Craig Road from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday. Interstate 15 from Russell Road to Craig Road was added to the route in October bringing the total vans in action to five. The I-15 vans operate from 11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, the peak hours for incidents along the route.

NDOT contracted with Boston-based Samaritania Inc., to provide the free service. A veteran in the industry, Samaritania



operates similar services in nine other states. They provide the guardian angels—certified mechanics trained in first aid, highway safety, hazardous materials, firefighting, traffic control and TLC, never more than 15 minutes away from any stretch or need.

They Can Fix Almost Anything

An Indy pit crew would be tickled with the warehouse on wheels the patrol provides. They stock gasoline, oil, diesel fuel, coolant, spare parts, hoses, belts, tools, oxygen, this and that. But more importantly, they stock a little security as Samaritans who put the safety of people first, vehicle repair second.

"With temperatures in the triple digits, the first thing we do is check on the condition of the people inside," said operator Tony Pisano. "We carry coolers of ice water," he said, adding that he has come across many a motorist in bad shape from heat, even though they do not yet realize it.



The concept is simple. Everything that blocks the road, even momentarily, backs up traffic. By clearing incidents quickly, the freeway can return to normal as soon as possible, reducing and even preventing secondary accidents. Motorist safety is an immeasurable added benefit.



One young mother broke down just before the construction area near the Spaghetti Bowl. It almost could not have been worse. She had a small child in the car. Adjacent was a steep embankment, impossible to scale. Uphill ahead was the interchange with no room for pedestrians to walk or exit. The car had no air conditioning, so the occupants were hot before they ran out of gas. Pisano's first thought—give the child water, then the mother. The car and congestion come next. Within seconds, he had the situation under control and sent the stranded citizens on their way.

"That can't help but make you feel good. Getting people off the road is our biggest concern. We want to help avoid accidents," he said.

Pisano will repeat the process another 20 times on an average six-hour shift. He and his partners, Joe Rosemore, Tom Van Fossen, Mark Grover and Joe Kruger logged 9,643 incidents over a five-month

period, and the result was always the same—gratefulness and appreciation from their thankful customers.

"The response has been overwhelmingly positive," according to Scott Foltz, Intelligent Transportation Systems manager for NDOT's Planning Division. Accolades and thank yous keep pouring in.

"People are so glad to see us," Pisano said. "They wave at us days later. They tell us everywhere we go."

Gas and flat tires are the most common offenders, victims of Las Vegas' one-of-a-kind weather, with road surface temperatures about 120 to 140 degrees on the white concrete pavement. They don't even want to talk about the black asphalt.

The patrol is not intended to replace private towing services. Operators ask, "Do you have someone I can call?" and "Do you have money for a tow truck?" They have a 15-minute per incident rule. If it cannot be fixed in 15 minutes, the vehicle

must be moved. "If it's major mechanical, their best bet is to get out of harm's way," Pisano said.

Just when operators think they have an idea what to expect on their routes—more accidents on the north, more breakdowns on the south and overheats everywhere in the afternoon—something surprises them as anything but routine. Like the woman who stopped in traffic to rescue a kitten, the man who pulled over to take a nap in the back seat, the cocktail waitress whose uniform became a hazard, the guy who loaned his car but not his gas key, the couple that met on the freeway to continue a disagreement, the repairman who needed directions. It's always something and they just never know.

The operators work with the Nevada Highway Patrol to keep a partnership for friendly security. They assist at accident scenes and they help to investigate abandoned disabled vehicles, saving troopers time for higher priorities.

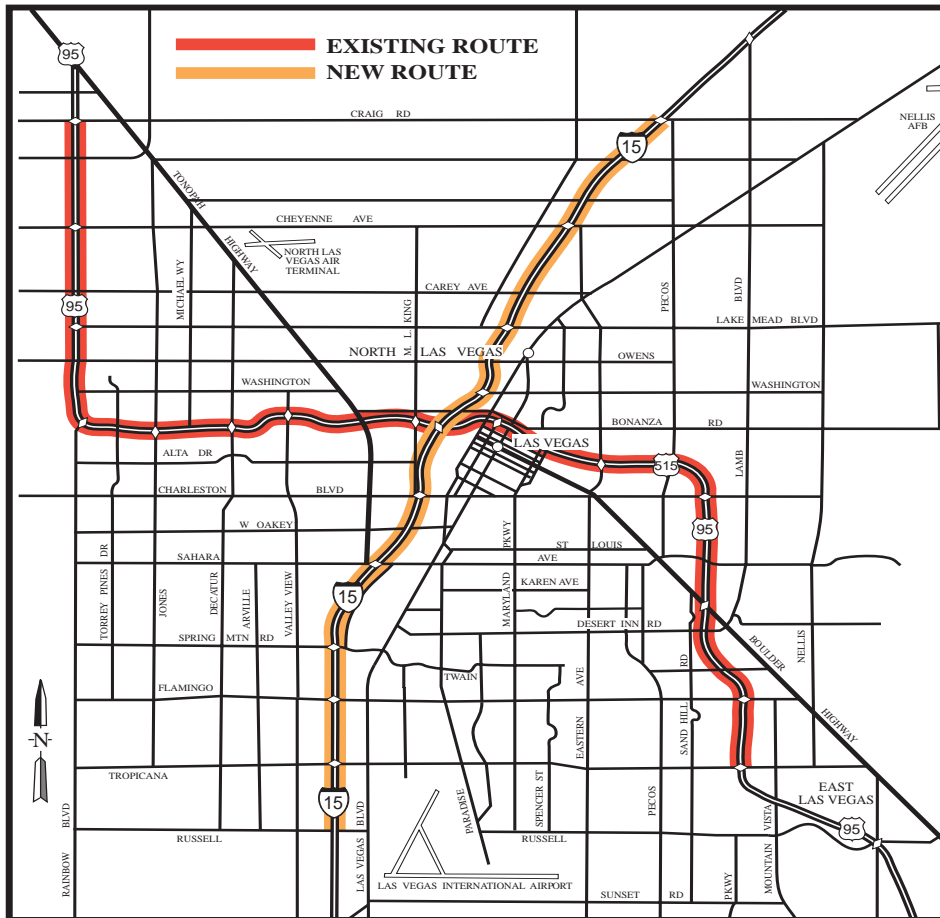


NDOT was honored by the Clark County Safe Community Partnership with a 1998 Leadership Award for Engineering for implementing the Freeway Service Patrol.



Above left: Freeway Service Patrol operators are Automotive Service Excellence certified and trained in emergency auto repair. Joe Rosemore puts his mechanical skills to work. Inset: l to r, Research Division's Scott Foltz and Keith Maki have had more than 3,000 positive responses. Above: Tony Pisano is one of five operators who help more than 2,000 stalled, wrecked, worn out, disabled or otherwise immobilized Las Vegas motorists each month. Left: The Nevada Highway Patrol welcomes help from the FSP.

LAS VEGAS FREEWAY SERVICE PATROL ROUTE



Did You Hear the One About...?

...The man with the flat tire? His spare was flat too.

...The man who went to pay a traffic ticket, spent the day in jail and ran out of gas on his way home—twice?

...The woman who was so embarrassed when she ran out of gas? Says the operator “When you are having a bad day, everything goes wrong.” Now her battery is dead too.

...The teenager who was discouraged thinking his transmission went out? It was just fuel problem.

...The man with the second verse same as the first? His brand new truck suffers the same defect in the same place with the same FSP operator as it did three months before.

...The Maytag repairman who ran out of gas. Guess he didn’t think he had anywhere to go.

...The man who is alive because he was asked to wait for a tow truck behind the guardrail? Minutes later a secondary accident demolished and catapulted his vehicle.

“The response has been overwhelmingly positive,” according to Scott Foltz, Intelligent Transportation Systems manager for NDOT’s Planning Division. Accolades and thank yous keep pouring in.

Dear NDOT:

I am writing this letter today grateful to be alive and I owe this to the State of Nevada Department of Transportation and more specifically to your Freeway Service Patrol Driver Tom Van Fossen.

My Honda Civic broke down on southbound U.S. 95 just south of Rancho Drive. I pulled over to the right shoulder, and used my cellular phone to call my wife who gave me the phone numbers to call a service garage and tow truck. As I hung up with the tow truck company, a van pulled up behind me. At first I thought I was the lucky customer of the fastest tow truck in the country. Better yet it was the Freeway Service Patrol.

Tom saw I had been making my phone calls from inside the car on the passenger side with the car door open and my feet hanging onto the pavement, right against the guardrail. He advised I stay out of the car and stand on the other side of the embankment, even though traffic was moving along relatively slowly, you never know what could happen. I heeded his advice and waited for the tow truck.

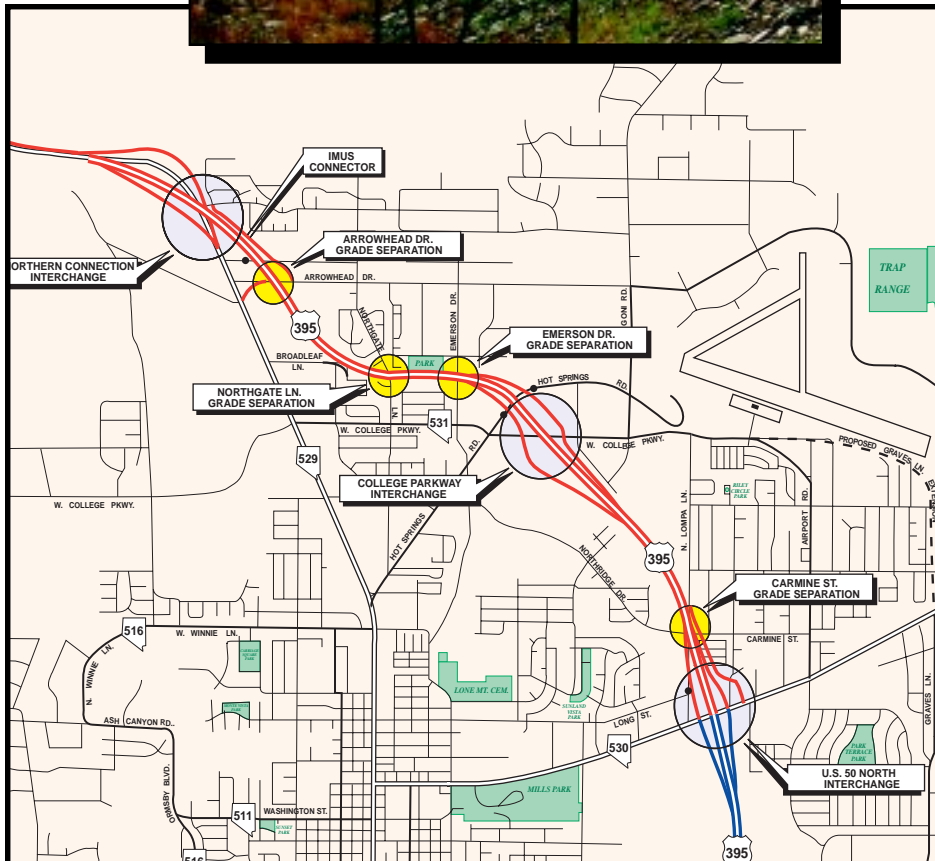
Not 15 minutes later, a Ford Bronco swerved into the number two lane where he hit the side of a semi, careened back into the number three lanes and headed straight for me and my car. I dove down the gravel hill as the Bronco plowed into my car, completely demolishing its back end and pinning it against the guardrail. Both cars ended up 30 or 40 yards from where my car originally sat.

Unbelievably, nobody was seriously hurt.

What if the service you provide did not exist? What if Van Fossen had not been patrolling the area when he did? What if hadn’t given me the simplest, yet most important advice I ever received? I wouldn’t be here to thank NDOT and Van Fossen for saving my life.

*My gratitude ranks higher than even this letter can describe. Again, I thank you, my wife Kristen thanks you, my family thanks you and anybody who is glad I am still around thanks you. Sincerely,
Wade Loewe*

Picking Up the Pace on the Carson City Freeway



When the Carson City Freeway becomes a reality, it will be the result of many long hours of blood, sweat and tears for NDOT employees currently working to get the job out the door and under construction.

With the new facility, Carson City will no longer have the distinction of being one of the only state capitals unconnected to a freeway.

Meeting the Millennium

Plans call for the \$82 million freeway to be advertised for bids in the fall of 1999 with construction completed by 2003. Four lanes will be built initially, with provisions for two additional lanes in the future.

Beginning at the foothill south of Washoe Valley known as Duck Hill, the freeway is set to go east of Carson, near Lompa Lane, about three miles from the current alignment of U.S. 395 along Carson Street.

NDOT's employees are working in various divisions and disciplines from Hydraulics to Bridge and Right of Way to Design all to complete preliminary concepts before the final design of the freeway takes place. Nearly every division will have a role in the first major Northern Nevada public works project of the millennium.

New Numbers

Because of the new U.S. 395 Freeway alignment, Carson Street will be known as State Route 529 for federal funding purposes instead of its current designation as U.S. 50 and U.S. 395. Now known as William Street, U.S. 50 East will eventually be known as State Route 530 west of Lompa Lane when the second phase of the freeway is built to replace U.S. 50 south through the city of Carson.

Retiring Board Members Gave Years of Service and Self to Transportation

Three members of the Nevada State Transportation Board will retire this year. Gov. Bob Miller, Lieutenant Governor Lonnie Hammargren and State Controller Darrel Daines have served the board in their official capacities, with their successors to follow in January.

Governor Bob Miller

Gov. Bob Miller has served on the Transportation Board since his election as lieutenant governor in 1987 and as governor he became chairman in 1989.

As president of the National Governor's Association he was instrumental in focusing Congressional attention on the critical transportation issues facing the states as Congress began to reauthorize the landmark transportation funding legislation known as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991. The resultant law, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century passed this year brought \$203 billion in federal transportation funding to Nevada over the next six years, an increase of more than \$70 million per year. Miller served as the NGA's lead governor on transportation and infrastructure from 1992 to 1995.

During his tenure, NDOT completed major transportation improvements

including the extension of the U.S. 95/I-515 Expressway from Boulder Highway to Lake Mead Drive in Las Vegas and the extension of U.S. 395/Interstate 580 to Mt. Rose in Reno. The board also authorized funding for construction of the Carson Freeway portion of U.S. 395 between Washoe Valley and the state capital. In December 1997 Gov. Miller presided over groundbreaking for the state's largest contract ever, the \$92 million Spaghetti Bowl in Las Vegas, with United States Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater.

Gov. Miller graduated from Bishop Gorman High School in Las Vegas, the University of California at Santa Clara and Loyola Law School.

Lieutenant Governor Lonnie Hammargren

Lieutenant Governor Lonnie Hammargren joined the Transportation Board upon his election in 1994. A leader in economic development on behalf of the state, during his term the board moved forward on a number of major projects including plans for the extension of Interstate 580 from Reno to Carson and began a major overhaul of I-15 with reconstruction of the Spring Mountain Interchange.



Governor Bob Miller



Lieutenant Governor Lonnie Hammargren



State Controller Darrel Daines



Gov. Bob Miller met with a top-level transportation team on Nevada's behalf. From left: FHWA Regional Administrator Julie Cirillo, United States Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater, FHWA Division Administrator John Price, Gov. Miller and NDOT Director Tom Stephens.



State Controller Darrel Daines speaks on funding that makes highways possible.

Hammargren is a clinical professor of neurosurgery at the University of Nevada School of Medicine in Reno. He graduated from the University of Minnesota and served his residency at the Mayo Clinic. He was the first trained micro-surgeon in Nevada.

State Controller Darrel Daines

Retiring State Controller Darrel Daines became a transportation member of the State Transportation Board in 1983 and now serves as vice chairman. He had previously served as comptroller for Clark

County since 1968. He graduated from Utah State University and attended the University of Utah Law School.

Daines is credited with developing the financing plan that not only accelerated by six years the construction of the east leg of the Las Vegas Expressway and Highway 395 in Reno, but also the four-lane divided highway between Carson City and Minden/Gardnerville.

"He deserves recognition for his creative approach to the logistics of highway building," said a Las Vegas Review Journal editorial.

Lieutenant Governor Lonnie Hammargren thanks John Ascuaga of Ascuaga's Nugget in Sparks for his cooperation and contribution of right of way for the Pyramid Way Interchange reconstruction.



About the Board

According to state law, the seven-member Transportation Board that governs NDOT is made up of four Constitutional officers including the governor, lieutenant governor, state controller and attorney general and three community representatives not actively engaged in highway maintenance or construction.

Of the community members, one must come from each of the engineering districts. To qualify they must either be a licensed professional engineer, have a financial or business background or hold a general contractor's license or act as a principal officer of a contracting firm licensed in Nevada.

The governor chairs the board, with the vice chairman elected annually. Each member serves a four-year term.

When the board was created in 1917 along with the Department of Highways, it began with three members appointed by the governor. By 1927 it was changed to include the governor, state controller and the attorney general.

As a policy setting body, the board is charged with approving every project constructed and those that are in the long range plan. They must approve additions and deletions from the state highway system, condemnations and actions to sell or relinquish property.

Season Finales



L to r: Jim Baetge, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency executive director; Jim Galloway, Washoe County commissioner; Director Tom Stephens; Bob Aronson, Tahoe Biltmore general manager; Mike Sage, Crystal Bay Club general manager and Mike Fuetsch, Jim Kelley's Nugget, hit the pavement on the last of the season's major contracts in the Sierra, a \$1.6 million state, county and private partnership on S.R. 28 in Crystal Bay.



Winnemucca's Craig Crawford wraps up rehabilitation on U.S. 95 before winter.



Crew 374's Sam Gallarzo tells the age-old story for work zones statewide, year-round. Be careful out there.

Rubbelized concrete is prepped before resurfacing along I-80 in District III.



Project Managers Take a Look at What's Ahead

A \$70 million annual increase in federal funding will bring new demands for diverse functional divisions within NDOT. Nowhere will they be felt as quickly as in the design of major transportation facilities.

To meet dramatically increased needs, Assistant Director for Engineering Susan Martinovich has announced the appointment of five project managers to implement a new engineering concept for NDOT that will affect the largest and most complex projects on the drawing board. The five are Jim Gallegos, Tom Greco, Genichi Kanow, Todd Montgomery and Kathleen Weaver.

Matrix management provides for a project manager to act as team leader responsible for the scope, budget and schedule of projects while coordinating and supervising consultant contracts.

Managers will coordinate between consultants and various NDOT divisions along with the myriad of other agencies that play a role in transportation projects.

The number of levels that participate in transportation jobs makes the use of matrix management innovative. The



New project managers represent a talented team of experienced engineers. Standing, l to r, Tom Greco, Director Tom Stephens, Assistant Director for Engineering Susan Martinovich and Jim Gallegos. Seated are Kathleen Weaver, Todd Montgomery and Genichi Kanow.

The Team Projects

- ***U.S. 95 in Northwest Las Vegas-Genichi Kanow.***
- ***Interstate 580 and U.S. 395 Freeway extension to Carson City, I-80/U.S. 395 Interchange safety improvements and the Reno Railroad Study-Todd Montgomery.***
- ***Widening I-15 from Las Vegas to the California state line and I-515 improvements in Henderson- Kathleen Weaver.***
- ***U.S. 93's Boulder City and Hoover Dam bypasses and U.S. 95's widening south of Railroad Pass-Tom Greco.***
- ***U.S. 395 Carson City Freeway Phases I and III-Jim Gallegos.***

concept itself is similar to the engineering process used at the Nevada Public Works Board to build facilities in the State Capital Improvements Program but highway building is unique in the layers of government that must fund and approve projects cooperatively with NDOT, like the local agencies and the Federal Highway Administration which has many requirements for federal spending. State DOTs in Utah and Arizona successfully use a form of matrix management to address rapid growth.

Project managers bring a wide and varied range of experience to the new positions, including design, safety, construction, public and private expertise that will help with in-house quality review.

"Some large projects including U.S. 50 Fallon/Fernley and Interstate 15/Sahara

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will still be designed in-house," said Martinovich, "but this gives us a cost-effective and expeditious way to accomplish the tremendous increase in workload ahead of us."



Pretty Close

to Paradise





NDOT's home on the range for Crew 327 in North Fork.

Even a seasoned traveler will be awed by the serenity that captures State Route 225, a hundred miles of highway between Idaho and Elko that passes through the Humboldt National Forest, the Duck Valley Indian Reservation and past the Wildhorse Dam and Reservoir.

Northwestern Elko County is exposed to the elements, a place where snow can blanket the winter countryside and a sudden summer storm will drop a surprise downpour. The highway has its challenges for Crew 327 based nearly midway along the route at North Fork. Around the clock, Rod Woldridge, John Kohot, Bob Shoup and Ben Rader make it their business to keep the critical route clean, clear and in good repair. For Woldridge, an 18-year NDOTer, that has been his job for more than 9 years.

"The first year I was here you could only see the top two inches of the fence posts." He was not phased. "I earned my stripes on District II's Mt. Rose, Spooner and Washoe Valley plow patrols," said Woldridge, who lives onsite along with the rest of the group.

State Route 225 connects Elko with Idaho past North Fork and Mountain City with spectacular scenery provided by the Wildhorse Reservoir, the Duck Valley Indian Reservation and the Humboldt National Forrest.



Catching up on local import at the general store are Chris Jordan of Idaho Power, Mel Basanez, Mitch Basanez and Oliver Tremewan.



Ben Rader's rainy road sign retrieval.

Their homes are frequently struck by lightning. "Ben's house has been hit and Rod had to replace a refrigerator. A radio blew up. When lightning struck the radio tower once it hit like an artillery shell," Kohot said.



North Fork's John Kohot comes in from the storm.

Below, from left: Crew 327's Bob Shoup, Rod Woldridge, Ben Rader and John Kohot and their comfy canine Tober.



The crew admits that through it all it is the hunting and fishing that attract them and the local lifestyle that lures them to stay.

Mountain City is a neighbor to North Fork. With a winter population of 28, the closest community is a hub for distant ranchers, farmers and more on their way to the forest ranger station, the post office, hardware store or the authentic local hot spot, Tremewan's General Store.

A mom and pop operation if there ever was one, Mel and Lou Basanez work

the store along with son Mitch and grandpa Oliver Tremewan, the retired justice of the peace, to greet customers. Between them, on Mountain City scale and Idaho time, they have just about everything a Walmart has to offer but with local flavor.

"They have the best beef in the state," according to North Fork's Woldridge. People try to stump them but they have just about anything we ever ask for."

That goes for their dog and mascot Tober, a Brittany, who they say is the best hunting dog in the state, too, even though he has been known to steal a steak or two from a hunter's ice chest.

Beef is big business in Northwestern Nevada. Cattle abound along the Mountain City Highway with much of S.R. 225 open range. The town's restaurant is a steakhouse. Tourism, recreation, hunting and fishing also support the

local economy. State highways play a major role in the trade.

NDOT completed chip seal and cattle guard improvements at Wildhorse recently and a project to place riprap along the edges of the dam next to newly installed guardrail. The department finished a \$957,000 repaving project and retaining wall in the area in 1997, Woldridge said.

As winter approaches, Crew 327 prepares to keep the highways open, with a look at the road and an eye on the sky.



The Bridge Over the River Owyhee

John Ferguson has a monumental jigsaw puzzle as NDOT's inspector for a bridge over the Owyhee River at Mountain City. Frehner Construction has the task of assembling a several-hundred piece temporary bridge to provide an alternate route as the existing structure is rebuilt.

Crew 912's Greg Boggs joins Ferguson in inspecting the progress expected to be complete by spring for 100 working days. Ferguson said that he had reached a landmark by day 17.

"I go through a can of insect repellent in two days. I got a case of it. The mosquitos, they're thick," he said, though it is a beautiful place to be.

The Bailey Bridge segments had been stored in NDOT's Carson Yard for emergency use before Equipment Division's Rich Walker inventoried the pieces, sending them on a 400-mile journey up the road. The effort is a partnership with Elko County to provide access to the local landfill and it provides an economic benefit to the farming community and the Duck Valley Indian Reservation.



Rich Walker, Carson, sends a bridge on its way to Mountain City for Frehner Construction crews.

An Honor and Tribute



From left, Director Tom Stephens presents new signs along with Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa, Onie Cooper, Temple Sinai Rabbi Myra Soifer, Second Baptist Church Rev. William Webb, NAACP President Ken Dalton, Senator Bernice Mathews and soloist Dr. Jesse Hall.

NDOT joined the Northern Nevada community in celebrating the dedication of U.S. 395 and Interstate 580 as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Highway. A 22-mile section from the California state line to Mt. Rose Highway was proclaimed to honor the civil rights leader as a result of action taken by the State Transportation Board.

The move was advocated by Onie Cooper, representing the Nevada Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission, who petitioned the board after making several proposals to rename Reno area roadways. NDOT placed memorial signs along the route.

Guests joined Cooper on July 24 to denounce what was called the racism, bigotry and sexism that face the nation, urging that people be judged by the contents of their character and not the color of their skin. To the gathering and the department he offered "Thank you, thank you, thank you."

In Step with the Community



NDOTer Trotters supporting the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation's Walk for a Cure in Las Vegas are, from left, Maggie Okleberry, Patty Mamola, with son Brandon, LoAnn Smith, Shawn Bitgood with mom Pat Manry, Jeanine Johnson, Roland Taylor, and Michelle Crager with son Mikey, who helped raise \$1,500 on behalf of NDOT's District I in Las Vegas.



Visitors Welcome

The National Scenic Byway designation goes to only 20 of America's most beautiful highways. State Route 445, known as the Pyramid Highway, approaches Pyramid Lake some 30 miles north of the Reno-Sparks community. Along with the route's designation as a scenic byway in 1996 came a master plan to encourage the economic development of the region.

NDOT was pleased to celebrate the recent opening of the Pyramid Lake Visitors Center to provide information to the traveling public on the lake's many attractions and its native people.

A cooperative effort of the Federal Highway Administration, NDOT, and the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, the visitors center will showcase interpretive



The Pyramid Lake Visitors Center north of Reno provides historical and cultural information.

information about the area's historical, cultural and environmental treasures.

The \$663,000 project rebuilt a 5,630 square foot structure built in 1977. An auditorium, meeting room, craft sales area, sanitary facilities and an exhibit area were also added along with parking lot, sidewalk and utility improvements.

Bison Construction of Carson City was contractor for the project with architecture by Ganther Melby Lee Architects and Planners of Reno, working in cooperation with NDOT's Architecture Division.

The only national byway sponsored by Native American Indians, the route crosses the Pyramid Lake Paiute Indian Reservation.

The nearby lake supports fishing and recreation in the area along with a balance of nature that includes cutthroat trout, deer, antelope, bighorn sheep, migrating fowl and more. Within the lake, the namesake pyramid comes from deposits from precipitation over hot springs that mold spectacular natural rock formations.

NDOT NEWS

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On the Cover—NDOT's Freeway Service Patrol in Las Vegas attends to more than 2,000 incidents per month clearing the way for grateful motorists on U.S. 95 and Interstate 15.

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